

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

MIHP # AL-IV-A- 168

1601 Frederick Street  
Cumberland, Allegany County, MD

Constructed between February 1959 to May 1960

Private Access

St. Luke's Lutheran Church and its L-shaped school and office wing were designed by architect T. Norman Mansell in 1959. The modest complex is an unusual example of mid-century Modern design in Western Maryland with a bold silhouette, a dramatic nave, and especially refined artistry in the interior details and craftsmanship. The silhouette of the church, dominated by a cross culminating 90 feet above the street level, stands out in the low-density setting of suburban Cumberland. The architecture clearly expresses the dual nature of the program: ceremonial in the interior of the Church and on the main, western facade, and utilitarian in the classroom and social hall interiors and on the facades facing the mountain to the rear of the site. The building's structure is composite, with concrete columns in the social hall placed below the laminated cedar frames that support the roof of the church. Cinder block is used as load bearing material for the school/office wings. The exterior is essentially covered in red brick with contrasting accents in concrete, and boasts an unusual parabolic entrance porch. The interior of the main worship space contains exceptional examples of faith-based symbolism, especially in the treatment of etched and colored glass.

St. Luke's, designed by T. Norman Mansell, America's foremost designer of Lutheran churches in the third quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, is significant under Criterion C because it is a typical but spectacularly detailed example of mid-century Modern design of vernacular religious structures. The quality of the architecture and especially the artistry and craftsmanship of the

interior detailing are unusual and perhaps unique for Allegany County and Western Maryland in general. Exceptional elements in the context of Maryland church architecture include the concrete tracery, deep red and warm wood interiors; the "period" custom-designed furniture and fixtures in the choir and chancel; the etched glass decor of the entrance door and narthex screen; and the glass reredos (of truly heroic proportion and quasi-supernatural vibrance). Philadelphia architect T. Norman Mansell, a devout Lutheran, took an evolutionary rather than revolutionary approach to St. Luke's, integrating modern elements, such as the tall, unadorned lateral campanile and the parabolic entrance porch with an interior conceptualized as a total work of art, masterminded by the architect and respectful of traditional church symbolism. Thus St. Luke's is best understood as a highly successful hybrid form of Modernism, featuring the same mix of prudent tradition and self-confident innovation as contemporary split-levels and ranchers.

Without pastiche, Saint Luke's revives the medieval tradition of visual didacticism in church architecture and contradicts the common wisdom that that Modernism and figurative art are incompatible. The value of the church complex derives from the way it serves and reflects the train of thought of average Lutheran worshippers and, more generally, the zeitgeist of Middle America in the late 1950s. Because of its architectural quality, T. Norman Mansell's importance as a previously unherraled designer of churches, and its uniqueness in the context of western Maryland, St. Luke's qualifies for exceptional significance under the 50 year rule.

The following National Register of Historic Places form was prepared for inventory documentation purposes only; the property has not been nominated to the National Register.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
other names \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 1601 Frederick Street ☐ not for publication  
city or town Cumberland ☐ vicinity  
state Maryland code MD county Allegany code 001 zip code 21502-1035

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.  
☐ determined eligible for the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.  
☐ Determined not eligible for the National Register.  
☐ removed from the National Register.  
☐ other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
Name of Property

Allegany, Maryland  
County and State

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

**number of contributing resources previously  
listed in the National Register**

## 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Religion

Social

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Religion

Social

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Modern Movement

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Concrete and brick

roof Other: artificial shingle

other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

Section 7 Page 1

### Description Summary:

St. Luke's Lutheran Church and its L-shaped school and office wing were designed by architect T. Norman Mansell in 1959. The modest complex is an unusual example of mid-century Modern design in Western Maryland with a bold silhouette, a dramatic nave, and especially refined artistry in the interior details and craftsmanship. The silhouette of the church, dominated by a cross culminating 90 feet above the street level, stands out in the low-density setting of suburban Cumberland. The architecture clearly expresses the dual nature of the program: ceremonial in the interior of the Church and on the main, western facade, and utilitarian in the classroom and social hall interiors and on the facades facing the mountain to the rear of the site. The building's structure is composite, with concrete columns in the social hall placed below the laminated cedar frames that support the roof of the church. Cinder block is used as load bearing material for the school/office wings. The exterior is essentially covered in red brick with contrasting accents in concrete, and boasts an unusual parabolic entrance porch. The interior of the main worship space contains exceptional examples of faith-based symbolism, especially in the treatment of etched and colored glass.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

### General Description:

### Setting and Site Plan

St. Luke's Lutheran Church, and its L-shaped school and office wing, are located on Frederick Road, a main artery of a low-density suburban area 1.6 miles northwest of Cumberland's historic downtown. The complex shelters 19,389 square feet of space sited on a 6.7-acre parcel adjacent to an unbuilt, pine-planted section of the Cumberland mountains. The two-story layout, which consists of two connected components, is dictated by the twelve-foot drop from the road frontage on Frederick Road to the 120-car parking lot at the rear of the site. It has an efficient and logical plan. At the front of the parcel, and at street level, one finds the Church, which is 115 feet deep and includes sacristies, offices, and a lounge on the same level. (The lounge can be accessed by a separate entrance at the end of the 200-foot long front façade that parallels Frederick Road). On the lower, parking, level, one finds a vestibule below the chancel, and the social hall and adjacent kitchen below the nave. Classrooms occupy the central portion of both floors. On the southern facade, the exterior of a two-story service and circulation wing is treated as if it were a transept for the church.<sup>1</sup> On the eastern (rear) elevation, three facades surround a landscaped courtyard.

At the front of the lot, a separate lane parallel to Frederick Street runs the entire length of the facade, allowing for drop-offs and pick-ups. The front elevation of the building is lined by a sidewalk and grass strip with clipped bushes, providing green accents to complement the red and white walls. The architect's sketches indicate a more elaborate treatment for the courtyard in the back, which is, at present, summarily landscaped with a lawn interrupted by pavement. Greenery is a strong presence around the entire site, however, as very tall pine trees not only cover the mountain behind the church complex but also face the northern edge of the lot.

### Detailed Exterior Description

The main western elevation is dominated by the tall gable of the narthex and its flanking tower. This gable adopts the low slope of the nave's wood frame. Its projecting eaves and vertical end walls are faced with white trim. Concrete ribs insure structural and visual stability: vertical members evenly divide the gable into seven

<sup>1</sup> The Archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which preserve many plans for churches in Maryland, hold no record for St. Luke's in Cumberland; the same is true of the archives of the architect, T. Norman Mansell, preserved at the University of Pennsylvania. The pastor, who does not own a complete set of blueprints, provided sketches for the floor plans, the front elevation, and the section through the nave toward the chancel, dated March 28 and 31, 1958. These are included as plates # 1, 2, and 3. The following description adopts the terminology used in these sketches, which also reveal that Mansell envisioned a flat-roofed, rectangular chapel on the right end of the narthex, which was not executed to cut construction costs. This low block would have created a less abrupt ending to the main western elevation and concealed the rather awkward proportions of the plunging, adjacent southern facade.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 3

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property  
St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
Allegany, Maryland  
County and State

sections; a horizontal course separates a plinth of red brick, approximately seven feet in height, from perforated concrete blocks. Each block is made of a square frame and of four arched inserts; their juxtaposition generates a continuous "tracery" of crosses inscribed in circles.

The rectilinear grid on the gable is interrupted in its center by a parabolic porch in concrete, projecting approximately two feet and resting directly on the sidewalk. The intrados are covered with blue-green mosaic, made of one-inch square tiles, with yellow Greek crosses worked into the design. Encased in the porch is a membrane of transparent and sand carved glass, slightly recessed from the wall of the gable. The aluminum mullions separating the fixed lateral panes from the double entrance doors are lined with the horizontal and vertical ribs of the gable. Etched on the "jambs" are two angels, representing those St. Luke mentioned in his gospel as present at the Resurrection, and on the lunette, a phoenix, the "mythological bird of the Resurrection"<sup>2</sup>, surmounted by the chi-rho sign.

The tower is a rectangular shaft of red brick, covered with a flat roof and devoid of interior stairs. A stone plaque indicating the year for the groundbreaking (1958) has been inserted at the base. At a height of approximately 15 feet, its narrow side facing the road is notched at the center. Higher up, its long sides have been hollowed to shelter a carillon, placed behind a perforated metal grid. The median notch anchors the elongated concrete cross, which weighs two and a half tons and consists of a long vertical shaft—straight and slightly projecting in the front, slanted in the back—and a short horizontal slab the width of the tower. Three evenly spaced squares have been inserted in the notch below the vertical arm of the cross, acting as "dots" extending its length.

The remainder of the front elevation consists of low volumes alternating solid brick surfaces with glazing (for the hyphens hosting the staircases) and concrete blocks identical to those found on the gable of the narthex. Roofs are flat with the exception of the slightly projecting end block, which features a low, inward, single slope. The brick wall of the end block is enlivened by white lettering and by a tall, narrow stained glass window representing St. Luke.

The southern elevation, sheathed in red brick with white trim at the eaves, consists of the nave/social hall block and the prow-like "pseudo-transept," which adopts the same low profile as the nave. As already mentioned, this elevation was not meant to exercise as much visual impact as it presently does: Mansell intended to conceal its lower, rather pedestrian section from view from the main road with a side chapel. The four long and narrow floor-to-ceiling windows of the nave are divided by mullions creating cross motifs. They are separated from the small windows of the social hall by a projecting belt course. The blind sides of the "transept" are inset with large chi-rho motifs. The beveled end of the transept has lateral brick walls with a canopied wooden door raised above a brick stoop on the left side; like the gable of the narthex, its central portion features vertical ribs and a tracery of cross-cum-circle concrete blocks.

<sup>2</sup> *Dedication Book*, 9.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 4

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

The eastern, rear elevation is dominated by the gabled and curved end of the Church, with a clear horizontal division between the lower/foyer and upper/chancel levels. As in the front entrance to the church, structural ribs divide the central portion into seven vertical sections. At the foyer level, these sections consist of five glass panels and two wooden doors. At the chancel level, they consist of dalle de verre windows, which will be described below as interior features. The three facades surrounding a landscaped courtyard have minimal detailing and generous openings: French doors for the social hall; ribbon windows with red brick spandrels for the two-story classroom wing (interrupted by three doors at the courtyard level); two rows of four windows for the transverse wing, which has no openings on its end wall; and ribbon windows on the northern facade.

### Detailed Interior Description

#### The Church

The narthex, nave, choir, and chancel of the Church form distinct spatial entities, but are united by the uniform use of red carpeting and warm-toned wood for the structure, ceiling, and furnishings. From the parabolic porch, one enters the narthex. On either side of the entrance, the lower wall (matching the red brick plinth on the outside) serves as an open coat rack. The upper section (backing the concrete tracery on the outside) was originally glazed, allowing additional light to penetrate into the church. In the early 1980s, to counteract major heat loss, the glass was covered with wood paneling inserted within the vertical dividers. A large cross in dark wood is placed above the interior entrance.

Approximately nine feet high, the screen separating the narthex from the nave is composed of a central, fully glazed, double door and of five panels on each side. Up to the waistline, these panels are in mahogany; their upper portions feature glass with etched motifs, framed by wooden members. The etched glass represents symbols of the celebration days of the religious calendar. Beginning from the left (when facing the altar), these are:

- Advent (shield of John the Baptist: "nimbed lamb standing upon a book and bearing the banner of victory")
- Christmas (a rose, representing "the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah that the desert shall blossom as a rose" when Christ comes to earth, and four stars);
- Epiphany (five-pointed star and three crowns of the wise men); Lent (the head of an ox, an animal symbolizing "strength, sacrifice and penitence," with two knotted scourges denoting penitence underneath)
- Holy Thursday (chalice and cross)
- Good Friday (pelican)
- Easter (bursting pomegranate)
- Ascension (chariot w/Chi-Rho symbol)
- Pentecost (nine-pointed star, seven-fold flame)



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

Section 7 Page 5

- Holy Trinity (three fish in a triangle and Latin cross).

Accessed frontally from the narthex, and laterally from the pseudo-transept and the school wing, the nave is spanned by frames of laminated wood suggesting a boat shape. The vertical supports are detached from the outside walls and the residual spaces serve as side aisles. The uprights are slanted inward slightly to adjust to the inward curve of the upper frame. Smaller beams run perpendicular to the frame, and the ceiling is covered with wooden boards. Painted the same brown color as the frame, new air conditioning ductwork is visible but discretely placed at the spring point of the arches. From the ceiling hang two rows of cylindrical light fixtures. On either side of the central aisle, wooden pews provide a seating capacity of 426. The pew-ends are straight and angular on the front, oblique and curved on the back, as to gently echo the profile of the wooden frame. The lateral windows were originally clear, but colored glass was added in 1967, designed by Mansell in an abstract pattern that suggests the sails of a ship. The side walls are painted white.

Placed between the last two structural frames, the elongated rectangle of the choir is raised three steps above the nave. It is separated from the side aisles by wood panels below and acoustic screens above. The screen located to the left when one faces the altar hides the organ pipes. Also to the left is a small organ and polygonal wooden pulpit. An effigy of Jesus Christ, sculpted in the half-round in a lighter tone of natural wood, was added to the central panel. To the right, a polygonal lectern is adorned in its hollowed central portion with three wooden cubes, which are carved with (from top to bottom) intertwined Alpha and Omega Greek letters, the Chi Rho symbol, and the Star of David. Behind the pulpit and lectern are transverse pews, modeled after those in the nave. The removable baptismal fonts measure approximately four and a half feet in height and two feet in width at the top. They are generally placed at the terminus of the central aisle, right below the steps to the choir. Made of the same wood as the pulpit and lectern, they adopt their faceted and truncated profile and are topped by a copper basin. The sole decorative element is provided by a horizontal copper insert near the top.

A wooden communion rail, detailed with Chi-Rho motifs, separates the choir from the shallow chancel, which is framed by brick covered walls. The freestanding central altar is raised one step on a polygonal slate platform. Placed between the legs of the altar table, a panel depicts the Last Supper. A frieze in low relief representing the Lord and apostles was executed in the same wood and same naturalistic style as the effigy of Christ on the pulpit. Seen from the choir, the edge of the horizontal plane of the altar is engraved with the inscription, "This is my body, this is my blood, given and shed for you." The altar is framed by two wooden candleholders, which combine circular pedestals and tops with cross-shaped vertical supports. Placed at either end of the chancel, two higher stands are built according to the same geometric principles. The lateral chandeliers and the cross on the altar have bases in shiny copper, shaped as half-domes. The cylinders of the chandeliers are inset with the Chi-Rho symbol, also in shiny metal.

The chancel ends with the slightly curved stained glass "reredos," reaching a height of 21 feet at its apex and consisting of over 7,000 pieces of hand-cut, faceted glass inserted in reinforced concrete. Mansell recommended non-representational motifs, but Pastor William Snyder, who also came up with the idea of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

Section 7 Page 6

adding religious themes to the narthex screen, "wanted the architecture to proclaim Biblical teaching." Designed by Willett and Son in Philadelphia after an iconographic program established by Pastor Snyder, who selected episodes of the life of Christ "found only in the scripture written by Luke," this end window is divided into seven sections, each three-and-a-half feet wide.<sup>3</sup>

The following descriptions are numbered 1 through 7, starting from the left as one faces the altar:

- The central panel (# 4) shows, at the bottom, a Nativity Scene and, at the top, Christ in Majesty ascending to heaven, his head crowned by a dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit.
- Panels # 3 and # 5 (i.e. those framing the central panel we have just described) have symmetrical compositions. At the top there is an Angel; in the middle, a shoulder length depiction of the apostles, topped by the flames of the Holy Spirit (they are watching the Lord as he ascends to heaven). At the bottom, we see shepherds and their sheep kneeling (they complement the central Nativity Scene).
- Panel # 1 depicts, at the top, the Crucifixion, and, at the bottom, the Lord with Martha and Mary. This last scene, which took place at Bethany, is continued at the bottom of panel 2, which is topped by a representation of the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican and that of the Good Samaritan.
- Panel # 6 depicts, at the top, the Parable of the Prodigal Son. In the middle is the Parable of the Lost Coin, and at the bottom Christ healing the ten lepers, a scene continued on panel # 7, which also narrates (at the top) the story of Resurrected Christ on the road to Emmaus, breaking bread with two of his followers, who have recognized him.

Although each scene is clearly identifiable, color more than content attracts the eye and sets the reredos in motion. A great blue arch hovers above the lower scenes and a deep red crescent acts as a pedestal for Christ in Majesty.

### Other rooms at the upper level

Functions related to the church service are accommodated in short wings adjacent to the choir. To the left, when facing the altar, are two sacristies: one where the celebrant robes and which includes a toilet and a closet for vestments; the other with a kitchenette. To the right is a room for the choir, which can be partitioned (its windows are currently covered by chalk and bulletin boards). A stairwell occupies the remainder of this "pseudo-transept."

From the narthex, a corridor running parallel to Frederick Street gives access to a glazed stairwell, separate bathrooms for men and women, and two large classrooms, each of which can be partitioned in three smaller spaces by built-in accordion dividers. The classroom floors are tile and the walls are concrete block. The

<sup>3</sup> William R. Snyder, letter to Isabelle Gournay, March 2003.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 7

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

original built-in radiators and ceiling lights have been preserved. The longitudinal corridor ends with a second, identical stairwell. A transverse corridor gives access to three wood-paneled offices. The general corner office is graced with a small stained-glass window representing St. Luke with the lamp of knowledge and a pen, the work of Pierre Millous. At the end of the transverse corridor, there is a roomy parlor with large window on two sides, with a red brick fireplace framed by built-in bookcases on the blind back wall. The original Scandinavian-looking furniture (plate 4) has been replaced by more traditional and bulkier items and the linoleum floor has been carpeted. Interviews indicated that the learning center L-wing had to be modified from a flat roof design because of water damage, but interior and exterior inspection (as well as the examination of period photographs) suggests that the extant, single-slope ceiling is original.

### Lower floor

The curved foyer is flanked by bathrooms on either side. Its present use as additional storage space does not allow visitors to fully appreciate its lofty and elegant proportions. Through three doors adorned with etched glass, one enters the rectangular social hall. Its cylindrical columns separate slightly lower "aisles" from the beamed central "nave," which ends with a raised platform accessible from either side. The curving stage is framed by two cubicles. The space underneath the sacristies is used for a large kitchen, which contains most its original, stainless steel fittings and can be accessed from the landscaped courtyard. The kitchen also has two large pass-through windows (wood panels that flip down on both sides) to the social hall. The space underneath the choir room in the pseudo-transept is occupied by storage. To the right of the stage, a passage leads to the boiler room behind the platform (and below the narthex) and to a spinal corridor serving the stairwells, bathrooms, and classrooms. The nursery has kept its original built-in cabinets.



**8. Statement of Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☐ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- ☒ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☒ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

**Area of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1959-1960

**Significant Dates**

1959

1960

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation****Architect/Builder**

Mansell, McGettigan &amp; Fugate

George F. Hazelwood Construction Co., Cumberland, MD

**9. Major Bibliographical References****Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

**Previous documentation on files (NPS):**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository:

University of Maryland, School of Architecture,  
Planning & Preservation

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

### Summary Statement of Significance:

St. Luke's, designed by T. Norman Mansell, America's foremost designer of Lutheran churches in the third quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, is significant under criterion C because it is a typical but spectacularly detailed example of mid-century Modern design of vernacular religious structures. The quality of the architecture and especially the artistry and craftsmanship of the interior detailing are unusual and perhaps unique for Allegany County and Western Maryland in general. Exceptional elements in the context of Maryland church architecture include the concrete tracery, deep red and warm wood interiors; the "period" custom-designed furniture and fixtures in the choir and chancel; the etched glass decor of the entrance door and narthex screen; and the glass reredos (of truly heroic proportion and quasi-supernatural vibrance). Philadelphia architect T. Norman Mansell, a devout Lutheran, took an evolutionary rather than revolutionary approach to St. Luke's, integrating modern elements, such as the tall, unadorned lateral campanile and the parabolic entrance porch with an interior conceptualized as a total work of art, masterminded by the architect and respectful of traditional church symbolism. Thus St. Luke's is best understood as a highly successful hybrid form of Modernism, featuring the same mix of prudent tradition and self-confident innovation as contemporary split-levels and ranchers. Without pastiche, Saint Luke's revives the medieval tradition of visual didacticism in church architecture and contradicts the common wisdom that that Modernism and figurative art are incompatible. The value of the church complex derives from the way it serves and reflects the train of thought of average Lutheran worshippers and, more generally, the zeitgeist of Middle America in the late 1950s. Because of its architectural quality, T. Norman Mansell's importance as a previously unheralded designer of churches, and its uniqueness in the context of western Maryland, St. Luke's qualifies for exceptional significance under the 50 year rule.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 2

### Resource History and Historic Context

#### Overview of Significance

Designed by T. Norman Mansell of Mansell, McGettigan & Fugate—a firm with an impressive track record in ecclesiastical design—the complex comprised of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, school, and social hall is a typical, albeit much more refined than average, example of mid-century Modern design of religious structures. The Church has long been an object of intense pride for its successive pastors and congregation members. This interpretation of the Modern Movement—evolutionary rather than revolutionary, popular rather than elitist—has, as far as religious buildings are concerned, received little scholarly attention and praise.<sup>4</sup> This is the case despite the extraordinarily large number of churches in this idiom one can find in Maryland and throughout the United States. Although the parabolic porch welcoming worshippers and symbolizing the entrance to the empty Tomb of the Resurrection, strikes a happy, futuristic note, St. Luke's was not intended as a cutting-edge experiment. Indeed, as it combines gentility with assertiveness, Mansell's design, dubbed "contemporary Gothic" by the local press,<sup>5</sup> features the same mix of prudent tradition and self-confident innovation as contemporary split-levels and ranchers. Its value derives from the way it reflects the train of thought of "average" Lutheran worshippers and more generally the "zeitgeist" of Middle America in the late 1950s.

When compared to other churches built in Western Maryland around 1960, St. Luke's is of unmatched visual interest.<sup>6</sup> Without pastiche, Saint Luke's revives the medieval tradition of visual didacticism in church architecture and contradicts the common wisdom that that Modernism and figurative art are incompatible. Here as in Gothic cathedrals, the stained glass window teaches what Pastor William R. Snyder refers to as the "salvation message."<sup>7</sup> The interior of the church showcases a very high degree of craftsmanship.<sup>8</sup> Truly exceptional is the combination of superior artistry, especially in the treatment of etched and colored glass, and powerful faith-based symbolism. Further, the complex, which remains practically unchanged since it opened, is characterized by an excellent site strategy and an efficient, user-friendly layout.

St. Luke's has many exceptional, if not unique, elements in the context of Maryland church architecture: the parabolic porch; concrete tracery; the deep red and warm wood interiors; the "period" custom-designed furniture and fixtures in the choir and chancel; the decor of the entrance door and narthex screen (with their

<sup>4</sup> This idiom is, however, well studied for single-family houses.

<sup>5</sup> "Cornerstone of St. Luke's Church Laid," *Cumberland Evening Times*, July 6, 1959 (newspaper clipper provided by Pastor Snyder)

<sup>6</sup> Other churches built in Cumberland in the 1950s and 1960s, such as Grace Baptist Church and the Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross, are rather mediocre renditions of the A-frame/brick gable model.

<sup>7</sup> Pastor William Snyder, letter to Isabelle Gournay, March 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Pastor Snyder, letter to Isabelle Gournay, March 2003 explained that as "construction in Cumberland was experiencing a difficult period," the contractor made sure to have his "top people," which it wanted to retain despite the economic downturn, work on the church "at the very best price".

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 3

almost surreal contrasts between highly figurative forms and a translucent, almost immaterial medium); and the glass reredos (of truly heroic proportion and quasi-supernatural vibrance).<sup>9</sup> To such outstanding artistic merits, the following historical data add other layers of significance to St. Luke's Church.

### History of the Congregation and Commission

Lutheranism was introduced in Allegany County in 1794. There are currently five Lutheran congregations in Allegany County: three in Cumberland, dedicated to evangelists Paul, John and Luke; one in La Vale; and one in Frostburg). Saint Luke's was incorporated as a church within the Lutheran Synod on February 12, 1848. Dedicated on March 17, 1850, its original building was located on Bedford Street. Services were in German until 1920. On June 5, 1927, the church and school moved to a neo-Gothic structure (currently occupied by the Disciples of Christ church) at the corner of Bedford and Columbia Streets, approximately one and a half-mile southwest of their present location.

On October 30, 1957, the congregation voted to relocate to the present site. Despite demographic decline, Cumberland was experiencing a certain degree of sprawl and St. Luke's, a well-organized and dynamic congregation, saw its membership increase.<sup>10</sup> William R. Snyder was still in his mid-20s when he became Pastor for St. Luke's in 1955 (his tenure lasted five years). He and other church leaders were open to new ideas in the field of art and architecture, and Cumberland was not a bastion of aesthetic conservatism.<sup>11</sup> After 1960, Modern-looking homes could be found in residential neighborhoods, including one near St. Luke's, the local housing authority commissioned a distinguished high-rise design for senior citizens, and public schools also adopted a clutter-free aesthetic.

Relocation from a tight downtown site plagued by an acute "parking problem" was dictated by the need for additional classrooms for the Sunday school, as well as the desire to follow members to the suburbs and to secure outdoor space for social functions and children's play.<sup>12</sup> Groundbreaking took place on June 1, 1958; the corner stone was laid on July 5, 1959. On May 1, 1960, the "magnificent \$625,000 contemporary church structure was dedicated with an indebtedness of \$175,000" in the presence of church and elected officials, of

<sup>9</sup> The church sets itself apart from well designed but more conventional A-frame Lutheran churches built during the same period in Maryland, such as Charles Edward Stade's St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Glen Burnie (1951); Ronald Senseman's Ascension Lutheran Church in Landover Hills, 1959; and Milton Prassas' Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in North Bethesda (1961). In the 1960s, dramatically steep silhouette became popular for Lutheran churches, as evidenced by Stanley Arthur's Calvary Lutheran Church in Silver Spring (1965) and Thomas Slicox's Grace Lutheran Church in Lutherville near Baltimore County (1966).

<sup>10</sup> Lutheranism was on the rise in other parts of the country. According to Albert Chris Janer and Mary Mix Foley, *Modern Church Architecture*, New York, 1962, 136, "from 1946 to 1960, the Lutherans gained more than two million new members, most of them converts." On p.127, the same authors mention that "Lutheran Congregations have led the way in the contemporary approach to religious design, often electrifying conservative communities with their modern churches."

<sup>11</sup> For instance, Luther Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church, in Delavan, Wisconsin, also designed by Mansell in 1956, was much more traditional than St. Luke's.

<sup>12</sup> *Dedication Book*, p.4



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 4

Mansell and his associates Fugate and Lewis, the latter speaking on modern religious architecture at a dinner gathering clergymen of all faiths.<sup>13</sup> Vice-President Richard M. Nixon sent a telegram of congratulations.<sup>14</sup> In 1962, with 1,010 baptized, 817 confirmed, and 705 communing members, St. Luke's was the largest Lutheran congregation in Western Maryland.<sup>15</sup> In five years, 500 members had joined the congregation.

St. Luke's met the spiritual and spatial demands expounded by Lutheran authorities. Emphasis was placed on the altar and pulpit; the narthex was thought of as "a liturgical space—pleasant, well-lighted, and inviting" and large enough to "allow the easy formation of procession."<sup>16</sup> As evidenced in the *Dedication Book* and subsequent publications, including the current website,<sup>17</sup> St. Luke's pastors have made a concerted effort to endow the architecture and decoration of their church with a deep symbolic meaning. The claim that the architecture of a church "breathes the message of the Bible" is rather uncommon in Modern ecclesiastical design and adds to the significance of the building.<sup>18</sup> According to the *Dedication Book*, the "entire west wall tells us the glorious story of our Saviour's Resurrection, Ascension and Eternal Reign" and "the main entrance a parabole [sic], geometrically speaking, and it is a parable, allegorically speaking. This beautifully fashioned curve of concrete is symbolic of the entrance of the tomb from which our Lord burst forth on Easter Morn." The mosaic embellishing the parabola is a bed of green, suggesting life over death. The grapes on the entrance door "represent the relationship between God and his children through Jesus Christ," as stated in the Gospel according to John (the Lord is the vine and the faithful are the branches). On the upper part of the gable, "the cross represents Christ and the circle stands for eternity."

The original liturgical organization of St. Luke's remains valid for the congregation's current needs. Eucharist is celebrated every other week. Congregants come forward to the communion rail and kneel to receive the wine and host. All facilities are used extensively. (On a recent research visit, families were baking dozens of pumpkin pies in the kitchen and the stage of the social hall was decorated for a party.) The church is active in local food banks. Its Sunday School has 40-50 students. The building is well maintained and shows few signs of excessive aging. The Sexton has the care of the building, including cleaning; he is advised by the Property Committee.

### Mansell, McGettigan & Fugate

<sup>13</sup> "Modern Church Architectural Trend Outlined. Cumberland Clergy Hear Lewis Address," *Cumberland News*, May 3, 1960 (newspaper clipping provided by Pastor Snyder)

<sup>14</sup> *Historical Sketch*

<sup>15</sup> The church is currently a member of the Delaware-Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which was formed in 1988 with the merger of the United Lutheran Church in America (to which St. Luke's originally belonged), The American Lutheran Church, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches.

<sup>16</sup> *Space for Worship* published in 1982 by the Lutheran Church in America, p.11

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.hereintown.net/~stlukes/>

<sup>18</sup> Brochure, St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Cumberland, 1998, quoting Pastor Snyder.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 5

Pastor Snyder recommended T. Norman Mansell to the architectural committee at St. Luke's because he (the pastor) was familiar with and liked his Chapel at Wittenberg College in Ohio.<sup>19</sup> He wrote

Mansell was my suggestion based on work I had seen. Several [St. Luke's] church leaders met with him in Baltimore. On the basis of that meeting he was invited to meet with the Church Council, building committee and finance committee. He was chose by the Church Council after that meeting. The Department of Architecture of the United Lutheran Church in America guides us in providing information to the architect.<sup>20</sup>

In the late 1950s, there were few registered architects in western Maryland. No firm in the state had been extensively involved in the design of Lutheran churches, while T. Norman Mansell's office had already received dozens of commissions from this denomination, including some in Maryland.<sup>21</sup> Interestingly enough, St. Luke's in Cumberland was the only example of church complex Mansell listed in his biography for the I.A. Directory published in 1960, a clear indication of the pride he placed in a commission which may not have been one of his largest but certainly was one of his most fulfilling from an architectonic and artistic point of view.<sup>22</sup>

Thomas Norman Mansell (16 May 1904 – 25 October 1991) was born in Morrisville, Pennsylvania. After graduating from West Philadelphia High School, he enrolled in the architecture program at the University of Pennsylvania, one of the most distinguished in the country. The prominent designer and teacher Paul Philippe Cret was one of his instructors, Louis I. Kahn, who achieved international fame in the 1960s, one of his classmates. Rooted in both eclecticism and structural rationalism, Penn's Beaux-Arts-inspired curriculum taught Mansell how to achieve clarity and brilliance with regard to plan organization, facade composition, detailing of ornaments, and draftsmanship. The student drawings he preserved and gave to the University of Pennsylvania archives attest to superior artistic gifts, which allowed Mansell to win the Arthur Spayd Brooke Prize and the Faculty Medal for Excellence in Design before graduating with a B.Arch. (Summa Cum Laude) in 1926. While still a student, Mansell began working in the local office of Morris & Erskine, which he left in 1938 to establish an independent practice. In 1955, Mansell added Frank McGettigan and Edwin L. Fugate III as partners in the firm.<sup>23</sup> In 1959 he also promoted Wolfgang Rapp to partner. Rapp left to practice independently in 1961, and Richard Arnold Lewis replaced McGettigan as a named partner in 1968.

<sup>19</sup> Pastor William Snyder, phone interview with Mary Corbin Sies, March 6, 2003.

<sup>20</sup> Pastor William Snyder, letter to Isabelle Gournay, March 2003.

<sup>21</sup> The photographic archives of the *Baltimore News American* (University of Maryland, College Park) include Mansell's proposals for St Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church and School in Kingsville (BNA 352-12) and for Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church (1951) and School (1956) Old Hartford Road and Northern Parkway, Baltimore (BNA 193/32). While he was working on St. Luke's, Mansell also designed additions to Trinity Lutheran Church in Hagerstown, 1959 (drawings at kept at the Athenaeum in Philadelphia).

<sup>22</sup> In "Notes from An Architect's Diary," *Faith and Form* 2 (April 1969), 23-25, Mansell vividly expressed his frustration with conservative or impractical building committees.

<sup>23</sup> Frank McGettigan was born in Philadelphia in 1921 and graduated from Drexel University in 1950. A list of his principal works can be found in the 1960 AIA Directory.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property  
St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
Allegany, Maryland  
County and State

Section 8 Page 6

Mansell joined the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1942. He was active in the leadership of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA in the 1960s, serving on its Board of Directors and as President in 1966. He also belonged to the Philadelphia Sketch Club, serving as president in 1963-64, was a director of the Pennsylvania Society of Architects between 1968 and 1970, and chaired the national AIA Committee on By-laws and Rules in the same period. In addition, Mansell served as Director of the Church Architectural Guild of America (1951-52) and, in the 1960s, as Director and President of the multi-denominational Guild for Religious Architecture, which published the magazine *Faith and Form*. Mansell retired from the profession in 1978. However, he remained active for the rest of his life, pursuing many other artistic outlets, including etching, gem cutting, lapidary and jewelry design, painting, and poetry.<sup>24</sup>

In Pennsylvania, Mansell's firm produced some commendable secular work. Leeds & Northrup Co., a supplier of test and measurement equipment to the electronics industry, was a repeat client. In the 1950s, Mansell designed an administrative building for Springfield Township, his place of residence. In the AIA Directory for 1960, he also listed the Primos Elementary School in Upper Darby (1952).

However, an overwhelming majority of the firm's output was for the United Lutheran Church in America (ULCA).<sup>25</sup> In the late 1940s, Mansell was commissioned by its Board of American Missions to produce a series of "model churches": for each proposed style (such as Romanesque, Gothic or Colonial) or regional idiom (for instance, "Log Church," "Altadena" for California; "Larchmont") he provided a plan and a perspective. Mansell's actual commissions for the same time period were elegantly designed but remained traditional. Good examples include Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Havertown (Haverford County, PA, designed 1946) and All Saints Evangelical Lutheran Church in Baltimore (4215 Loch Raven Boulevard, designed 1947). Devised in the early 1950s, Mansell's "Contemporary" model for ULCA epitomized his departure from historicism and marked the beginnings of a decade of architectonic and artistic exploration, in which the Cumberland commission held a significant, if not catalytic, role. Completed in 1956, Mansell's *magnus opus* is the impressive Weaver Chapel at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio.<sup>26</sup>

Mansell's work was not published in architectural journals and has not been studied. Besides his student projects and working documents for the Wittenberg Chapel, the drawings he gave to his alma mater are presentation sketches in his own hand, either plans or bird's eye views, drawn in black pencil on tracing paper.

<sup>24</sup> In 1979, Mansell exhibited one hundred etchings, aquatints and dry points, pencil and lithograph sketches and pen and ink drawings at the Philadelphia Sketch Club, the oldest art club in the United States (see "Outstanding Exhibition to Open," Press Release, Philadelphia Sketch Club, November 21, 1979, courtesy Free Library of Philadelphia)

<sup>25</sup> In the late 1950s, Mansell also designed an office building for the ULCA Board of Publications in Philadelphia. Near Philadelphia, Mansell also designed a few churches for other denominations, such as the Church of Christ in Springfield (1946) and the Drexel Hill (n.d.) and Newton Square (n.d.) Baptist Churches in Pennsylvania and The Presbyterian Church of Toms River in New Jersey (1965-67).

<sup>26</sup> [http://www4.wittenberg.edu/tour/campus\\_activities/weaverchapel.html](http://www4.wittenberg.edu/tour/campus_activities/weaverchapel.html). In 1956, Wittenberg conferred an Honorary Doctorate upon Mansell.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property  
St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
Allegany, Maryland  
County and State

Section 8 Page 7

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, a number of Mansell's simple but exquisitely rendered perspectives were published in yearbooks jointly produced by the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the T-Square Club. Apparently his habit was to propose two possible schemes for each commission and to devise a comprehensive master plan grouping many different services around the church, while suggesting successive building campaigns in a small numbered diagram. Also kept in the Mansell archives are three photostats (undated, but prepared after 1960) presenting "samplings" drawn at the same scale of the firm's elevations, plans, and sections for Lutheran churches, most likely intended as promotional material favoring a "mix-and-match" design selection process.

According to Mansell's son, building churches was "his way of doing ministry."<sup>27</sup> Located in at least 40 states (including Alaska) and in Canada,<sup>28</sup> his commissions for Lutheran congregations ranged from modest to grand.<sup>29</sup> Nearly 120 of them are documented in the Mansell archives. Some were in country settings, most in booming suburbs (in particular, Mansell produced designs for the Pennsylvania and New Jersey Levittowns).

Although the Mansell touch is evident on all the drawings preserved in his archive, regional variations are important.<sup>30</sup> A significant number of proposed designs never saw the light of day; many of those built have been altered, and a few even demolished. Few pastors currently in charge of a Mansell-designed church seem as convinced of its architectural merit as Stephen F. Yelovich, the current pastor of St. Luke's, and few have responded to requests for additional information.<sup>31</sup> Consequently, the parallel drawn here between St. Luke's and other Mansell-designed Lutheran churches will be based on the examination of preserved sketches, as opposed to actual buildings.

Mansell also gave his alma mater a typewritten manuscript entitled *It Took Me 70 years*, a collection of his major addresses and writings, which helps understand his design philosophy. A devout Lutheran, Mansell deemed "vital" that churches "be designed through spiritual inspiration and not theological direction, to accommodate the liturgy, to express what we believe, and to provide an atmosphere for worship where man can confront his God."<sup>32</sup> Although he adhered to Sullivan's "form follows function" creed (as evidenced in his

<sup>27</sup> Recorded in "T. Norman Mansell, 87; architect, jeweler, poet, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 October 1991. Pastor Snyder totally concurred with this assertion.

<sup>28</sup> St. Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba and Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hamilton, Ontario, both designed in 1958.

<sup>29</sup> Small churches include Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church in Athens, Ohio and Holy Comforter Lutheran Church, 3319 Alabama Avenue S.E., Washington, D.C., both designed in 1957.

<sup>30</sup> For example, Mansell devised a very "woodsy" exterior for Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church in Portland, Oregon (designed 1957). For Florida, he favored quirky zig zag roofs for the ancillary wings, as evidenced in projects for Emmanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church in Naples (designed 1960) and Luther Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church in West Hollywood (designed in 1961).

A notable exception was Pastor Paul R. Kanupp, who forwarded *History and Symbolism. Holy Communion Church. Dallas, North Carolina 1885-1978*. Designed in 1968, this church has a fish-shaped plan and beautiful stained glass by the Willet studio in Philadelphia.

<sup>32</sup> T. Norman Mansell, "The Shape of the Church," reproduced in *It Took Me 70 Years*, typewritten manuscript, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, T. Norman Mansell Collection, n.45



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 8

treatment of Saint Luke's school wings), he preferred evolutionary to radical change in church design, declaring himself unwilling "to throw overboard the forms of worship, the cross, church symbolism, and the traditions of two thousand years, for an architectural tradition which may become obsolete in fifty years."<sup>33</sup> His Beaux-Arts training led Mansell to consider buildings as "total works of art" masterminded by the architect. He believed that "the usual church furniture supply house has incompetent furniture designs and too often is only interested in a sale"<sup>34</sup> and deemed it appropriate for an architect to "suggest subject matter" to artists:

I lay the responsibility for designing the architectural framework for art, for setting the kind of art idiom to be used (...) upon the doorstep of the Architect. It is in his recognized architectural function to design the building as a unified whole lest chaos result, involving not only the exterior of the church, but also its interior, its total coordinated color scheme, and its furniture. This does not put the Architect in position to be the artist, or to indicate in exacting detail the stained glass, the sculpture, the mosaic or the mural. But it does require him to control the artist's general direction while giving him the opportunity for change and for the full expression of his talents within the architectural framework. This architectural control involves scale, quality, dimensions, cost and appropriateness of subject matter."

He added, "I like to list and price all the proposed arts within the churches I design, so they will be known to the church authorities and the congregation and be a matter of record in the church files."<sup>35</sup>

Mansell excelled at site planning. Many master plans were variations on the theme of the medieval convent, with open or closed rectilinear courtyard configurations. But he also experimented with Y- and V-shaped schemes, sometimes articulated by circular vestibules. St. Luke's linear and frontal main elevation dominated by the gable of the narthex was subsequently adopted for Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tullahoma, Tennessee (designed in 1958, with a parabolic church front and a school entrance denoted by a triangular gable and a parabolic porch) and the Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church in West Long Branch, New Jersey (designed 1960). In the 1950s, Mansell favored elongated rectangular naves (as was the case for St. Luke); in the following decade, he experimented with polygonal, even parabolic, footprints. St. Luke's wood framing system and low roof profile were also Mansell's favorites in the late 1950s. Sheltering sacristies in a wing perpendicular to the choir was adopted not only in Cumberland but also at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Seattle (designed 1959). Drawings for other churches indicate the same placement for the altar, lectern and pulpit as in St. Luke. At St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Williamsport (designed 1956-58), Mansell also envisioned adding an effigy of the patron saint on the pulpit.

<sup>33</sup> T. Norman Mansell, "Excellence in Design," Address delivered before the joint meeting of the Church Architectural Guild of America and the Bureau of Church Buildings and Architecture, Chicago, no date, (c.1960) reproduced in *It Took Me 70 Years*, typewritten manuscript, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, T. Norman Mansell Collection, p.253.

<sup>34</sup> (T. Norman Mansell, "Art in the Church," reproduced in *It Took Me 70 Years*, typewritten manuscript, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, T. Norman Mansell Collection, 268.

<sup>35</sup> (T. Norman Mansell, "Art in the Church," reproduced in *It Took Me 70 Years*, typewritten manuscript, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, T. Norman Mansell Collection 267 and 269)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 9

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property  
St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
Allegany, Maryland  
County and State

Mansell was partial to the single lateral campanile, treated as a tall, slender, and unadorned tower. First experimented with by German architects Domenikus Böhm at St. Engelbert in Cologne-Riehl (1930) and Fritz Höger at the Wilmersdorf Church in Berlin (1932), and exploited by Eliel Saarinen at the First Christian Church (1942) in Columbus, Indiana, this massing formula had become an insignia of church modernism. Mansell offered many personal variations on the single tower theme. A particularly large specimen was intended for Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church in Athens, Ohio (designed 1957). The tower for St. Matthews Evangelical Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana (designed 1956) was totally free standing, while that for the Advent Evangelical Lutheran Church in Elmont, NY (designed 1958) was connected to a canopy (and decorated with a Chi Rho symbol). Towers for Zion United Lutheran Church in Penn Township, Pennsylvania (designed 1957), Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church in Levittown, Pennsylvania (designed 1959); and Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church in Akron, Ohio (designed 1960) were placed at the center of entry courts. Triangular bases were adopted for St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Newark, Delaware (designed 1957) and St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Neenah, Wisconsin (designed 1958). Topping shafts with a tall but narrow cross, as had already been done at St. Luke's, was envisioned for Berkeley Hills United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pittsburgh (designed 1959) and Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Key West, Florida (designed 1961).

Mansell's other major take on "High" Modernism was the hyperbolic parabola. Since the French engineer Eugène Freyssinet had used this shape for airplane hangars near Paris (1921-23), it had come to symbolize structural and aesthetic innovation. Again, Domenikus Böhm's Saint Engelbert provided a ground breaking experiment in the ecclesiastical field. But it was in Mexico and Brazil that the parabola truly fulfilled its promise to rejuvenate church design, as it achieved monumentality even at a small scale, and provided a refreshing combination of playfulness, lyricism, and spirituality. The seminal and canonical Latin American example is Oscar Niemeyer's Chapel of St. Francis of Assisi in Pampúlha, Brazil (1943).<sup>36</sup> Mansell was certainly familiar with this work, but his infatuation with the hyperbolic parabola can be more directly traced to his meeting with Felix Candela (1910-1998) on a church study tour of Mexico in the early 1950s. He found the Spanish-born engineer "brilliant" and modern Mexican church architecture "graceful."<sup>37</sup> Mansell framed the chancel of the Wittenberg Chapel with an awe-inspiring parabolic arch, then adopted the same design for Grace Baptist church of Germantown, Pennsylvania, which received a design excellence award from the Guild for Religious Architecture in 1957. Designing parabolic porches, as a way to introduce a little "dash" to otherwise rather staid facade compositions was the next logical step: after to Saint Luke, Mansell envisioned them for Christ the King Evangelical Lutheran Church in Florissant, Missouri (designed 1958 with inset vertical notches), Faith

<sup>36</sup> Another notable example is Enrique de la Mora's La Purisima Church in Monterrey, Mexico, with an exposed nave and a slender free standing tower (illustrated in Anton Henze and Theodore Filthaut, *Contemporary Church Art*, New York: Sheed & Ward, 1956). A parabolic arch was also used by Kenzo Tange for the Peace Memorial (1949-55) in Hiroshima, Japan.

<sup>37</sup> T. Norman Mansell, "An Architect Looks at Mexico," first published in *Anno Domini* with Mansell's illustration, reproduced in *It Took Me 70 Years*, typewritten manuscript, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, T. Norman Mansell Collection, 196 and 197

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 10

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property  
St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
Allegany, Maryland  
County and State

Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rockford, Illinois (designed 1959-60, the plan of the church itself was parabolic), and Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church in Athens, Georgia (designed 1959, with a truncated triangular profile for the nave).<sup>38</sup>

### The Willet Studios

The stained glass company selected by Mansell and the church committee has kept "very detailed records" of St. Luke's Church, as it is one of the company's "favorite pieces to show off."<sup>39</sup> The reredos was designed by Marguerite Gaudin and executed in the company's headquarters in Chestnut Hill near Philadelphia, using a large quantity of slab glass imported from France.

William Willet founded the company in 1898. He is best known for his collaboration with architect Ralph Adams Cram, the driving force behind the last phase of Gothic Revival design in the United States. In particular, Cram and Willett were associated on the Cadet's Chapel at the United States Military Academy in West Point. William's son, Henry Lee Willet, took over the studio after his father's death in 1921. As the company gained national respect, other artist-designers were hired to attend to an ever increasing demand from religious congregations.

In the 1950s Willet was one of the first American studios to design and fabricate faceted or *dalle de verre* (slab glass) windows.<sup>40</sup> This technique was devised by French glass makers in the 1930s, as part of a larger movement promoting renewal in liturgical arts. Favored by well-known artists like Fernand Léger, Jean Bazaine, and Alfred Mannessier for either abstract or stylized figurative windows, slab glass met with immense popularity world wide in the 1950s and 1960s. Instead of lead, *dalle de verre* calls for colored glass, about one inch thick, to be set in concrete with metal reinforcement laid out between pieces on a specially prepared base (after 1960, epoxy resin was preferred to reinforced concrete as it was less prone to aging, dimensional variations, and cracks). The glass comes in rectangular blocks measuring approximately 30 cm by 20 cm "made by scooping molten glass from the furnace and casting it in molds" and is cut by hand or with a circular mechanical saw.<sup>41</sup> On the outside, pieces of glass are set flush with the concrete frame, in order to better

<sup>38</sup> At the Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Forest, Mississippi (designed in 1960), Mansell envisioned covering the nave and transepts with parabolic arches. A very tall parabolic arch with horizontal fins and an inset cross motif was devised as an entrance motif for Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, in Oxford, Ohio (designed 1961).

<sup>39</sup> Nikki L. Isgar, Willet Stained Glass Studio email message to Isabelle Gournay, March 2003. Prior to St' Luke's, Mansell's Grace Evangelical Church in Pottstown (1955), PA had received Willett windows.

<sup>40</sup> Additionally, Henry Lee Willet developed the Sculptured Gold window technique, first implemented at the Westwood Community Church (1951) in Los Angeles, and experimented with different methods of laminating stained glass. In 1965, E. Crosby Willet, the son of Henry Lee Willet, became the President of the Willet Studios, which became a division of the Hauser Art Glass Company in 1977. Information compiled by consulting <http://www.hauserglass.com>.

<sup>41</sup> According to Lawrence Lee, George Seddon, Francis Stephens, *Stained Glass*, New York 1976, 181, this type of glass is "made by scooping molten glass from the furnace and casting it in molds," and 187, "it is best to vibrate the panel after concrete is poured to make sure that this material beds down".



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 11

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property  
St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
Allegany, Maryland  
County and State

withstand the elements. Inside, in order to generate a visual depth and chromatic intensity, their edges have often been chipped with a hammer and the glass can project from the concrete setting. The concrete or epoxy "grout," which allows for *dalle de verre* windows to be load-bearing, is much wider than the lead mullions used in traditional stained glass, leading to less naturalistic renditions of figurative scenes. From the inside, when backlit by sunlight, the dark gray concrete, although it occupies a significant amount of the window surface, seems "dissolved" by the colored glass. The resulting ethereal glow cannot be achieved with thinner leaded glass.<sup>42</sup> From the outside, the concrete gives windows a more architectonic character than lead does, and openings appear less like "holes on a wall." One does not realize substantial savings by setting glass into concrete instead of lead, as the implementation process of the two techniques—initial sketch, full scale cartoon, establishment of cut lines for the glass, cutting and assembly—are basically similar. But Modernist architects saw in the more "primitive" slab glass technique (which in fact recalls pre-Gothic construction methods) a more appropriate match for their straightforward, neatly articulated masses.

Marguerite Gaudin (1909-1991) designed the St. Luke's windows in Cumberland. A 1930 graduate of the Philadelphia College of Arts, she first worked for the Curtis Publishing Company in Philadelphia. One of her major contributions was "Finney the Office Gold Fish," a monthly cartoon for the youth magazine, *Jack and Jill*. She was employed by Willet Studios in 1931, becoming its principal designer within a decade and subsequently serving as Director and Vice-President. "Working closely with Henry Lee Willet, she developed his concepts into magnificent scale drawings in both opaque and transparent color. Her work can be seen in more than 1,000 churches and secular buildings, in all 50 states, and five foreign countries."<sup>43</sup> Major works designed by Gaudin include the last six windows executed in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City, all windows for the National Presbyterian Church and Chapel in Washington, D.C. (1967-68), and six nave windows in San Francisco's Grace Episcopal Church (1964-66). She is credited with one of the largest *dalle de verre* compositions ever executed, measuring 30,000 square feet, for the Hall of Science at the 1964 Worlds' Fair (Wallace K. Harrison architect). Marguerite Gaudin also excelled at watercolor painting and exhibited work in this medium at the Philadelphia College of Art and the Philadelphia Art Alliance. She was the first Artist-Designer admitted into the prestigious Stained Glass Association of America.

The Willet Studios collaborated with leading modernist architects such as Pietro Belluschi (Temple Adath Israel, Merion, PA, 1959) and Marcel Breuer (Annunciation Priory, Sisters of St. Benedict, Bismarck, ND, 1963), for windows which were not designed by Marguerite Gaudin.

<sup>42</sup> On rare occasions, the concrete frame was painted over.

<sup>43</sup> "Marguerite Gaudin, 82, stained glass artist, dies," *Chestnut Hill Local*, October 10, 1991, p.32 (clipping provided by the Willet studio)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

Section 9 Page 1

### Major Bibliographical References:

T. Norman Mansell, 1904-1991. A Finding Aid for Architectural Records and Personal Papers, 1922-1968 in the Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, 2003.

*Dedication Book, Saint Luke Lutheran Church, Cumberland, Maryland, May 1, 1960*

*Fact Sheet of Saint Luke Lutheran Church, Cumberland, Maryland, 3 pages, printed May 1962*

*Historical Sketch of St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church, typewritten document dated 9-29-1964*

*The Legacy and Promise of Saint Luke's Lutheran Church (1848-1998), Cumberland Maryland, leaflet May 1998*

Yelovich, Pastor Stephen F., "Saint Luke's Lutheran Church, Church History",  
[www.hereintown.net/~stlukes/history.htm](http://www.hereintown.net/~stlukes/history.htm)

"T. Norman Mansell, 87; architect, jeweler, poet, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Philadelphia, PA, 26 October 1991

Philadelphia Architects and Buildings, 2002, [<http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org>]

St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
Name of Property

Allegany, Maryland  
County and State

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.70 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	Zone	Easting	Northing

3	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	Zone	Easting	Northing

☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Isabelle Gournay, School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation  
Mary Corbin Sies, Dept. of American Studies

Organization University of Maryland, School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation date 1-31-05

street & number School of Architecture, University of Maryland telephone 301.405.6284

city or town College Park state Maryland zip code 20742

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

### Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

## Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

name St. Luke's Lutheran Church

street & number 1601 Frederick Street telephone 301-722-4190

city or town Cumberland state Maryland zip code 21502-1035

**Paperwork Reduction Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et. seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

MIHP# AL-IV-A-168

Name of Property

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Allegany, Maryland

County and State

Section 10 Page 1

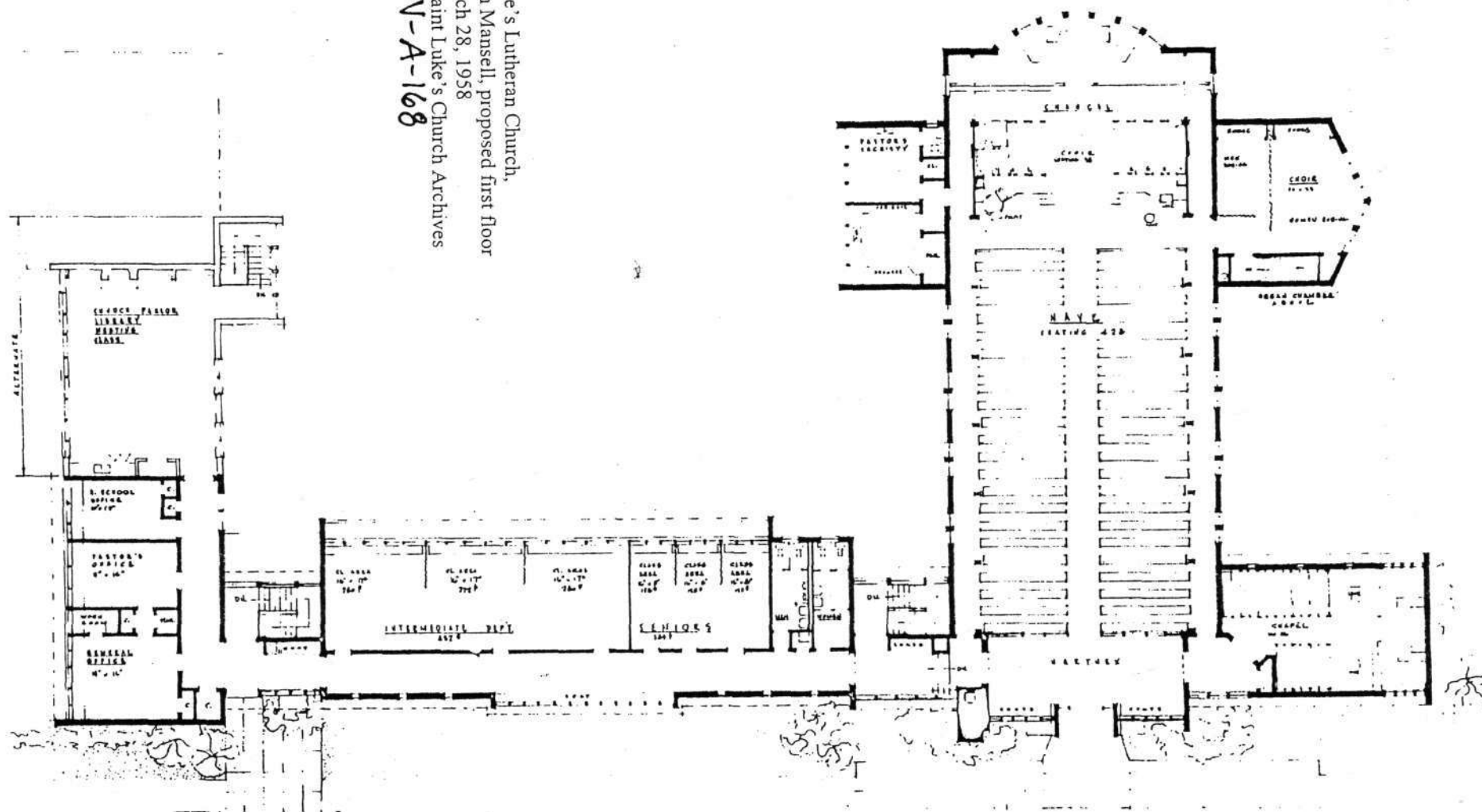
### Verbal Boundary Description:

A 6.7 acre property at 1601 Frederick Street in the City of Cumberland, Maryland. It is parcel 7036 of Map 100.

### Boundary Justification:

Tax documents do not identify this property by block and lot numbers but list it as Group 82.

Plate 1  
 Saint Luke's Lutheran Church,  
 T. Norman Mansel, proposed first floor  
 plan, March 28, 1958  
 Source: Saint Luke's Church Archives  
 AL-IV-A-168



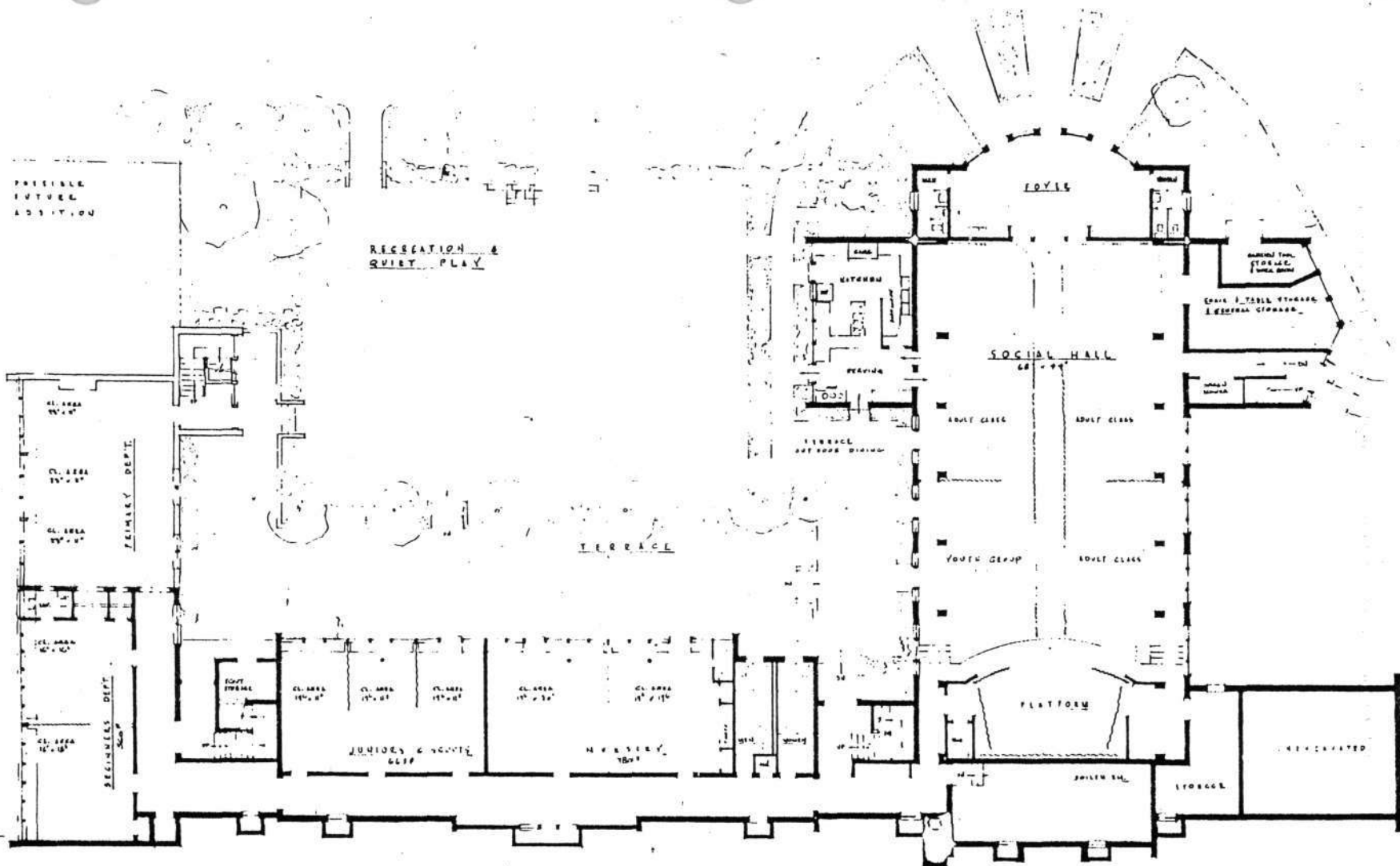
FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
 SCALE 3/4" = 1'-0"

SAINT LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND

T. NORMAN MANSEL, AIA  
 REGISTERED ARCHITECT  
 1017 CHESTNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA 3, PA.

MARCH 28, 1958





GROUND FLOOR PLAN

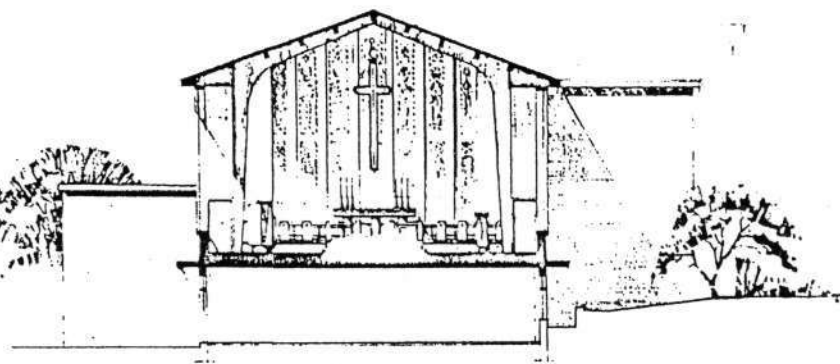
SAINT LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
CUMBERLAND MARYLAND

NORMAN MANSELL AIA  
REGISTERED ARCHITECT  
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70112

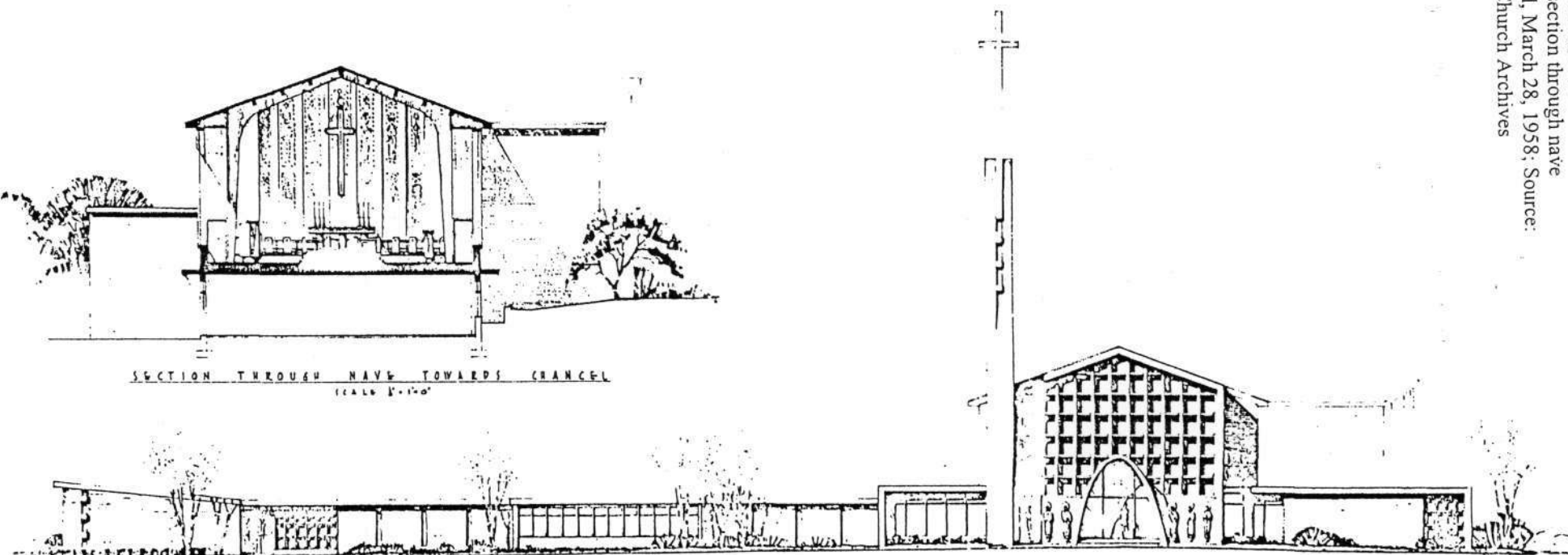
MARCH 10 1956

AL-IV-A-168

Plate 3 **AL-IV-A-168**  
 Saint Luke's Lutheran Church,  
 T. Norman Mansell, proposed front  
 elevation and section through nave  
 toward chancel, March 28, 1958; Source:  
 Saint Luke's Church Archives



SECTION THROUGH NAVE TOWARDS CHANCEL  
 SCALE 1/4"=1'-0"



FRONT ELEVATION  
 SCALE 1/4"=1'-0"

SAINT LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND

T. NORMAN MANSELL, A.A.  
 REGISTERED ARCHITECT  
 100 CHESTNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA 5, PA.



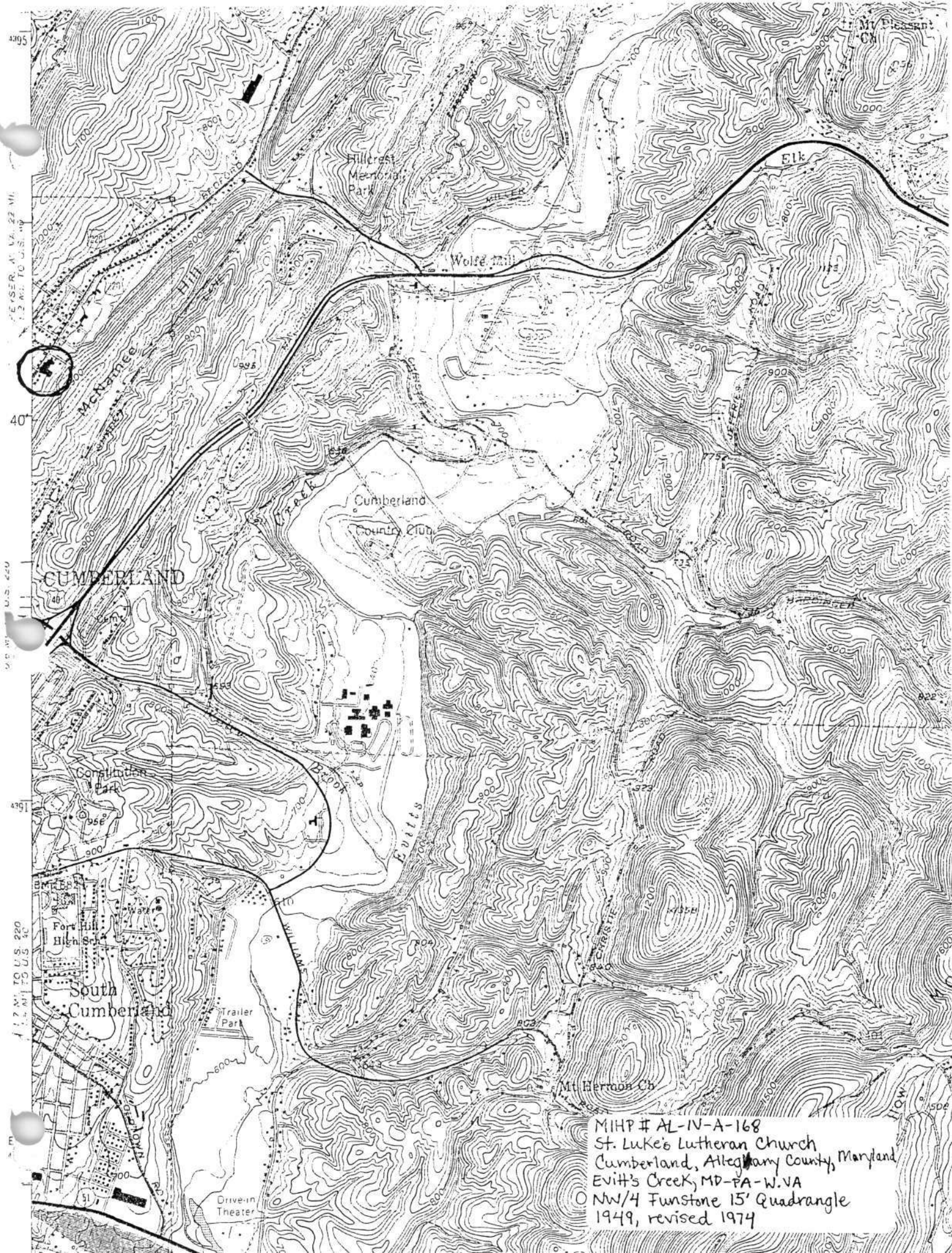
MARCH 31, 1958



NURSERY DEPARTMENT

Plate 4 **AL-IV-A-168**  
Saint Luke's Lutheran Church,  
Original condition of the nursery  
department and church parlor; Source:  
Dedication book, May 1, 1960. Saint  
Luke's Lutheran Church Archives.





MIHP # AL-IV-A-168  
St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
Cumberland, Allegany County, Maryland  
Evitt's Creek, MD-PA-W.VA  
NW/4 Funstone 15' Quadrangle  
1949, revised 1974



25

ST. LUKE'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
1000 S. 10th St. S.W.  
Tulsa, Okla. 74106  
(918) 438-1111





AL-IV-A-168

St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick Street.  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay

November 2003  
Maryland Historic Trust  
Western Elevation on Frederick St. (detail)

#2





AL-IV-A-168

St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick Street  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay  
November 2003  
Maryland Historic Trust  
Southern Elevation



AL-IV-A-168

St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick St.  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay

November 2003

Maryland Historic Trust

Southern Elevation





AL-IV-A-168

St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick St  
Cumberland, MD 21502

Isabelle Gournay

November 2003

Maryland Historic Trust  
Southern Elevator (detail of classroom wing)



AL-N-A-168

St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick Street  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay

November 2003

Maryland Historic Trust

Western Elevation of Frederick St (detail of  
Church porch)



AL-IV-A-168

Saint Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick St.  
Cumberland, MD. 21502  
Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay

November 2003

Maryland Historic Trust

Entrance seen from narthax

#7





AL-IV-A-168

Saint Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick Street  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay

November 2003

Maryland Historic Trust

Detail of northax screen (north side)



AL-IV-A-168

Saint Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick St.  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay

November 2003

Maryland Historic Trust  
Chancel





AL-IV-A-168

Saint Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick Street  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay  
November 2003

Maryland Historic Trust  
Nave, choir, chancel



AL-IV-A-168

Saint Luke's Lutheran Church

1601 Frederick Street

Cumberland, MD 21502

Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay

November 2003

Maryland Historic Trust

Chancel & stained glass reredos



AL-IV-A-168

Saint Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick St.

Cumberland, MD 21502  
Alleghany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay

November 2003

Maryland Historic Trust  
stained glass reredos/top portion

#18





AL-IV-A-168

Saint Luke's Lutheran Church  
1201 Frederick Street  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Allegheny County, MD

Isabelle Gournay  
November 2003  
Maryland Historic Trust

Interior view of front office w/ stained glass  
window representing St. Luke



AL-IV-A-168

Saint Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick St.  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay  
November 2003  
Maryland Historic Trust  
have detail of pulpit



Das Kreuz ist ein Symbol der Liebe und des Friedens.  
Es steht für die Einheit aller Menschen und  
für die Hoffnung auf ein besseres Leben.

AL-IV-A-168

Saint Luke's Lutheran Church

1601 Frederick St

Cumberland, MD 21502

Allegheny County, MD

Isabelle Gournay

November 2013

Maryland Historic Trust

Navo: detail of lecture





AL-IV-A-168

Saint Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick St.

Cumberland, MD 21502  
Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay  
November 2003

Maryland Historic Trust  
lower level: entrance foyer to multi-purpose room

#16



AL-IV-A-168

Saint Luke's Lutheran Church  
1601 Frederick Street  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Allegany County, MD

Isabelle Gournay  
November 2003

Maryland Historic Trust  
multi-purpose room

#7